

Home Hacks That Will Improve Your Life



By: Stuart Nguyen

Abstract

Transforming your living space can greatly enhance daily comfort and efficiency. Simple home hacks like organizing with multi-functional furniture, decluttering spaces, or optimizing lighting can reduce stress and create a more inviting environment. Incorporating smart storage solutions, adopting energy-saving techniques, and using creative DIY fixes can make chores easier, while boosting productivity and well-being. Additionally, focusing on eco-friendly practices not only improves the quality of life but also reduces your environmental footprint. With the right hacks, your home can become a more functional, relaxing, and enjoyable place to live.



1. Introduction

Our homes are more than just places where we sleep and store belongings—they are the environments where we live, relax, and recharge. Small, simple improvements can have a big impact on how we experience daily life. Home hacks in Sydney, from clever storage solutions to energy-efficient adjustments, not only make your living space more functional but also help save time and reduce stress. Whether you're looking to maximize space, streamline household tasks, or create a more eco-friendly environment, these easy and effective tips can significantly enhance your overall well-being and improve your daily routine.

2. Home Organization Hacks You Should be Using



My job as a professional organizer is to simplify the lives and homes of my clients. But after working with so many households, I've noticed a common misconception about the process. A lot of people think it's too difficult, too time consuming, or even too expensive to get organized—which is often why they finally bite the bullet and pay someone like me to do it for them. While experts are highly beneficial—especially when an individual or family is exceptionally busy or they lack the skills to let go of things and create systems—it's totally possible to DIY the process.

To help you get organized without hiring a professional, I'm sharing my top home organization hacks in Sydney anyone (yes, anyone!) can do. These tips are broken down into three easy phases: Decluttering, organizing, and tidying, otherwise known as the maintenance phase. Use these easy-to-implement ideas to cut clutter and create the organized space you've been dreaming of.

Phase One: Declutter

Before you contain or label a single thing, it's important to let go of what you no longer need or want. It's silly to create space for something that doesn't belong anywhere, so don't be afraid to toss or donate the items that no longer serve a purpose in your home. This step can be difficult for some, but the following tips should help you determine what to let go of.

Do a Little at a Time

Trying to go through an entire household of possessions in one weekend is a recipe for failure. Your home didn't become cluttered overnight, so it won't magically be clutter-free in

that amount of time either. Choose small areas to start with and keep the habit up. Remember, completing micro tasks over and over adds up to more progress than getting too overwhelmed and doing nothing at all.

Toss the easy stuff first: To strengthen your decluttering muscle, start with what I refer to as the "no brainers." Go through the pantry or medicine cabinet and toss anything that's expired. This will help build your confidence and allow you to let go of the clothes in your closet that no longer fit, or the serving platter from your mother-in-law that isn't your taste but you're holding onto out of guilt.

Make declutter dates: I will actually schedule decluttering sessions on my calendar, especially during busy seasons of life, because it's so easy to forget that it needs to be done. Decluttering is a task that needs to be done regularly, but future decluttering sessions will become easier after your initial purge. Schedule two closet decluttering sessions per year, one in the fall and another in spring. Four times a year, set aside a couple hours to sort through toiletries and makeup (the first of each season works well for me), and plan a weekly date to toss expired food and do a quick fridge clean-out.

Follow the One In, One Out Rule



Following this rule can be tough, especially if you like to shop, but it's one of the easiest ways to stay on top of clutter. If you buy something new, remove something to create space for it. If you purchase a new printer, recycle or sell the old one immediately. Next time you pick up a new pair of shoes at the mall, donate an older pair you don't wear very often. Not only will

this keep your household tidy, but your old items can almost always be donated and used by someone else.

Stash a donation bag in the closet: I personally love and use this method as it creates extra space in my closet in between my biannual decluttering projects. I keep a small tote on the floor and use it to collect things I come across that no longer spark joy. Once it's full, I take it with me to a nearby charity when I'm out running errands.

Create a donation schedule: Learn the hours of your local donation center or, if you don't have one close by, inquire about pickup schedules. Most charities such as Big Brothers Big Sisters or the Vietnam Veterans of America will come to your neighborhood on certain days of the month. Check out donationtown.org to find where you can drop off or schedule a pickup in your area.

Establish a Daily Decluttering Routine

Get into the habit of cleaning out your car, purse, or work bag at the end of each day. Sort through the mail at least every few days, although I suggest scanning it daily to handle anything urgent. Put your laundry away as soon as possible (I know, easier said than done), and load the dishwasher right after dinner. Staying on top of the everyday clutter will prevent large pile-ups and eliminate stressful messes in the long run.

Go paperless: Paper is one of the worst offenders when it comes to daily clutter. Sign up for paperless receipts at the store, statements and bills from your banks and credit card companies, and learn how to get off of junk mail lists. This will cut down on everyday clutter and give you more time for more fun activities.

Digitally detox: While going paperless is smart, it often leads to digital clutter and I'll admit that I fall victim to this more than anything. It's not directly in our physical way so it's easier to ignore. If your email inbox is staggering or your phone is always letting you know it's running short on storage space, spend a few minutes at the end of day purging photos, apps, and more.

Phase Two: Organize

Once you've done an initial clean-out and learned to let go of unwanted items on a consistent basis, it's time to create a system for the stuff you're holding onto. These are my best home organizing tips you can implement today.

Prioritize Your Belongings

Place the things you reach for the most often at eye level or front and center. Less often used items can be stored on a high shelf or an area of the house with less foot traffic such as the basement.

Keep like items together: Always store similar things near one another so they have a home where they can be found and returned to with ease. All pairs of jeans should be contained in a drawer or portion of the closet, reusable water bottles should live in the same kitchen cabinet, and so on.

Create a utility zone: An observation that I've had after working in so many homes is that it's the seemingly miscellaneous items that cause clutter to be strewn around. Batteries, lightbulbs, furniture leg pads, and the like either don't have a home or are shoved in the junk drawer. Create a "utility zone" for these types of things so they're out of your way but can be found when they're needed.

Sort Items into Containers



I'm a big advocate for using containers whenever possible because they provide a physical boundary to how much you can actually store in them. If your pantry tends to be bursting at the seams, adding containers to corral everything from pasta to snacks can help to keep it tidier and prevent food waste.

Choose space-saving organizers: Supplies such as slimline hangers, stacking bins, and two tier lazy susans not only keep your things tidy, they also save a considerable amount of space which is especially important when organizing a small home.

Use multi-purpose furniture: Along the same lines, use functional furniture to maximize your space. Consider a storage bench for shoes, a mirrored jewelry armoire, or a desk and bookshelf combination.

Maximize Storage Space

Shelves and drawers aren't the only place to store organizational containers. As you work through each room, consider how you can maximize storage space there for more functionality.

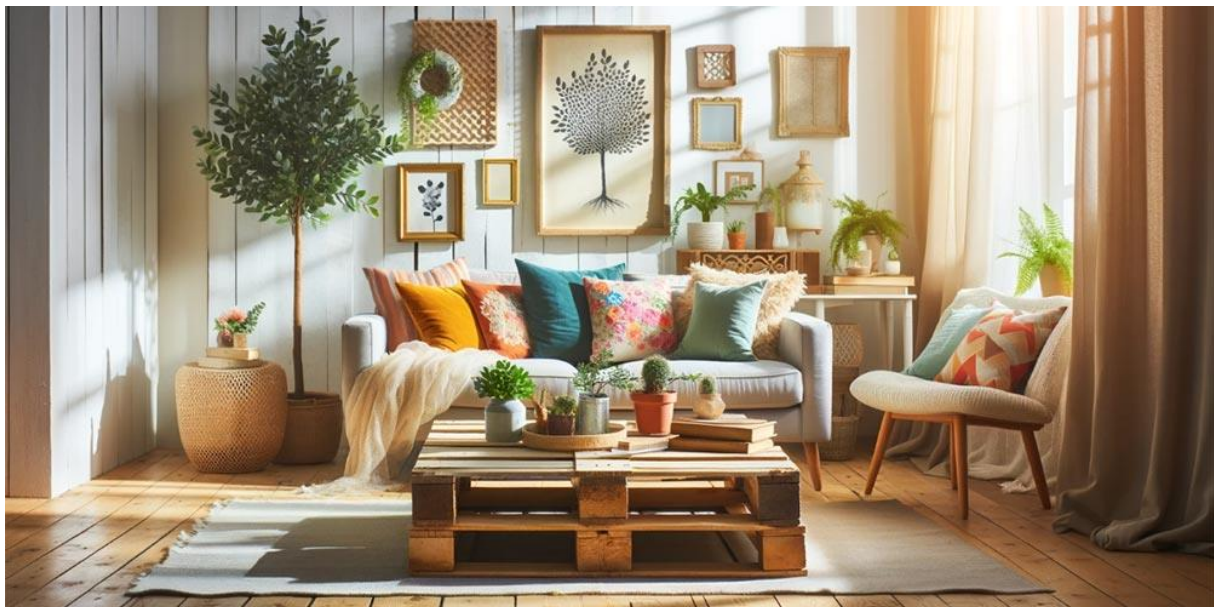
Go vertical: To keep the floor space clear, use the walls to organize. Use tall metal shelving units in the garage or basement storage area to stack totes of holiday decor, off-season clothing, and mementos you want to hold onto but don't need to have out on display.

Don't forget the doors: I have a back of the door organizer in almost every room. I have one in my entryway closet to store pet supplies and have used them for clients to organize beauty products in the bathroom. They're great for gift wrap supplies in the home office, diapers and accessories in a nursery, and more.

Label Like It's Your Job

Even if you don't think it's necessary, add labels to your containers and zones to minimize the guesswork. This is particularly helpful if you live with others or have help in the house so everyone can assist in keeping it organized.

3. DIY Home Decorating Hacks



Decorating like a designer doesn't have to be hard. There are many tips and tricks you can follow to help you transform your home. We've consulted several designers who shared their simple home decor ideas to breathe new life into your space. In this article, we'll provide home decorating tips to freshen up the rooms in your home without breaking your budget.

Home Decorating Tips for the DIYer in You

1. Set the Tone at the Front Door

If you want your house to make a great first impression, paint the front door a fun, glossy hue. “Red is a lucky color in many cultures,” says Lara Allen-Brett, a New Jersey-based stager. A red door meant “welcome” to weary travelers in early America, and on churches it represents a safe haven.

Two other hues gaining favor are orange and yellow, according to Sydney-based stager Christopher Breining. Both colors are associated with joy and warmth.

One thing that should go is an outdated screen door. Get rid of it or replace it with a storm door with full-length glass that you can switch out for a screened panel.

2. Paint Walls in Light and Neutral Colors



Painting a room a different color can create a dramatic change in your space. Stick to colors like beige or gray, especially on the first floor, where flow is important. “You want to minimize jarring transitions,” says Breining. Neutral walls give you the greatest decorating flexibility, allowing you to easily switch up your accessories.

And if you have two small rooms next to each other, painting them the same neutral color helps them feel larger. Look at a paint strip and move up or down a shade or two for a subtle variation from room to room, suggests Allen-Brett.

Changing paint colors is an inexpensive way to update a room. Match your new color to the surrounding decor so you don't feel compelled to purchase new accessories, or consider painting an accent wall to create some contrast.

3. Make Sure Your Sofa “Talks” to Your Chairs

Your living space is often where people congregate, drawing family and friends together. To create a warm and welcoming environment, consider arranging your furniture in a way that invites connection.



“A conversation area that has a U-shape, with a sofa and two chairs facing each other at each end of the coffee table, or an H-shape, with a sofa directly across from two chairs and a coffee table in the middle, is ideal,” says Michelle Lynne, a Dallas-based stager.

One common mistake to avoid is pushing all the furniture against the walls. “People do that because they think it will make their room look bigger, but in reality, floating the furniture away from the walls makes the room feel larger,” she says.

4. Let the Sun Shine

“When it comes to heavy, outdated drapes, a naked bank of windows is better than an ugly one,” says Lynne. Ideally, window dressings should be functional and elegant—think sheers paired with full-length panels.

If your room gets a lot of sun, opt for light colors that won't fade. The most recommended lightweight fabrics for panels are cotton, linen, and silk blends because they tend to hang well.

For homeowners looking to decorate without breaking the bank, new window treatments help dress up a room at a relatively low cost. Opt for curtains, roller shades, or vertical blinds to keep costs down. Or, as mentioned above, you can also strip your windows and leave them bare for natural light to stream in.

5. Hang at Least One Mirror in Every Room

"Mirrors can make a space feel brighter because they bounce the light around the room," says Breining. But placing one in the wrong spot can be almost as bad as not having one at all.

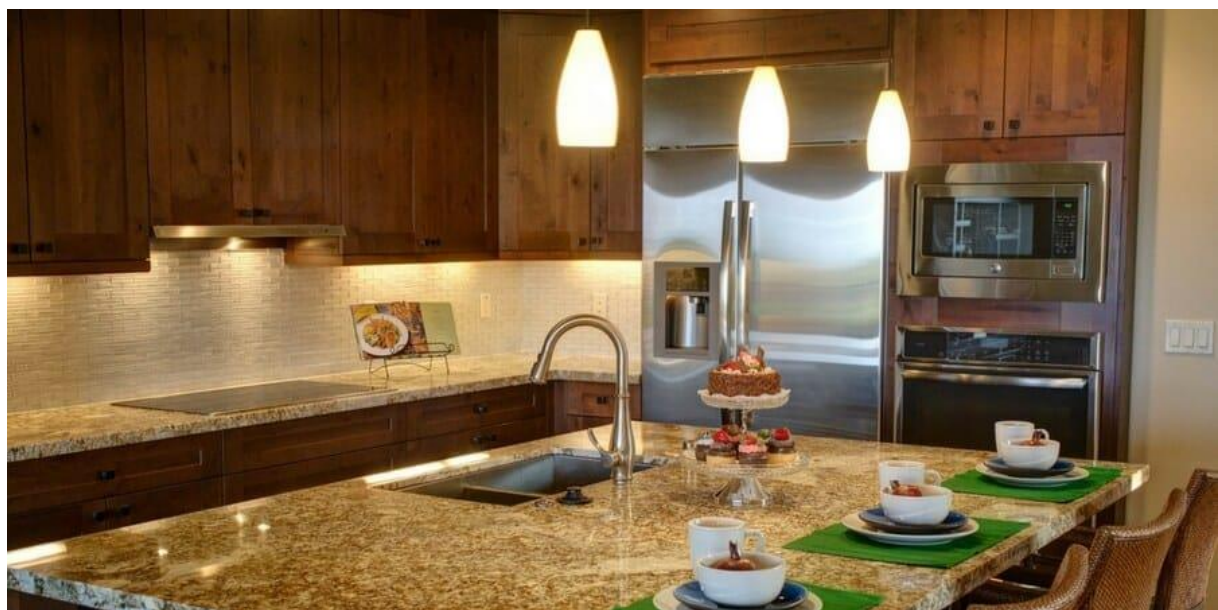
Put mirrors on walls perpendicular to windows, not directly across from them. Hanging a mirror directly opposite a window can actually bounce the light right back out the window.

6. Scale Artwork to Your Wall

"There are few things more ridiculous-looking than hanging dinky little art too high on the wall," says Breining. The middle of a picture should hang at eye level. If one person is short and the other tall, average their heights.

Take scale into account. For a large wall, go big with one oversize piece or group smaller pieces gallery-style. For the latter, don't space the pictures too far apart—2 to 4 inches between items usually looks best.

7. Layer Your Lighting



Lighting plays an important part in our homes, setting the tone and ambiance. Every room should have three kinds of lighting:

Accent: Accent lighting is more decorative and is used to highlight certain home features, such as artwork.

Ambient: This lighting provides overall illumination and often comes from ceiling fixtures.

Task: Task lighting is often found over a kitchen island or a reading nook.

For a living room, you should have at least 3 watts (42 lumens) per square foot. One visual trick Breining swears by is using uplights. “Placing a canister uplight or a torchiere in the corner will cast a glow on the ceiling, making a room seem bigger,” he says.

8. Anchor Rugs Under Furniture Feet

When it comes to area rugs, placement and sizing are key. “In a living room, all four legs of the sofa and chairs in a furniture grouping should fit on it—the rug should define the seating area,” says Breining. “At the very least, the front two legs of the sofa and chairs should rest on it,” he adds.

Even living rooms with less-than-generous proportions usually require an 8-by-10-foot or a 9-by-12-foot rug to properly accommodate a seating area. Go too small with the rug size and everything looks out of scale.

4. Clever Kitchen Hacks That Will Save You Time And Effort



Cooking can be as much fun or as much of a nightmare as you make it. If you cook regularly and enjoy doing it, you probably already know what a game changer some cooking hacks in Sydney can be when it comes to enhancing a dish or just saving some time. On the other hand, if you detest cooking and most of your kitchen endeavors end up in the trash, chances are you just need some cooking tips and tricks that will improve your skills immensely. Because, if we are completely honest, cooking is nothing but tons of inspiration, good foodstuff, and some food hacks that help you bring out the best in each ingredient.

However, kitchen tips are not all about cooking. Keeping your produce fresh, taking care of the cooking utensils, making sure everything is clean and safe – the list can go on and on. Getting rid of grease stains alone would take a whole chapter if you were to write a book on kitchen hacks.

As someone who loves cooking but has very limited time to spend in the kitchen, I greatly appreciate cooking tips and other hacks for around the kitchen that can help me save time and effort, and still enjoy the results.

So in this article we've collected a bunch of tips for cooking, keeping your kitchen clean with minimal effort, and having kitchen utensils serve you longer. Do you have a favorite tried and tested kitchen hack that has never failed you? Share it in the comments!

Preserve Your Herbs

Don't let your herbs dry out or go bad. You can preserve them by placing them in an ice tray with olive oil or water. Freeze them and take out when you're ready to cook with them.

Properly Clean Wooden Cutting Boards

Bacteria can build up if you don't properly clean your wooden cutting boards. Cut a lemon in half and dip the cut side with coarse salt. Use it to scrub your cutting board clean, then rinse.

Salt A Cast Iron Pan

Cast iron pans can rust up if you don't properly care for them. The best way to do that is with salt. Scrub your cast iron pans with salt instead of dish soap.

Muffin Tin Meatloaf

Meatloaf can take more than an hour to cook. You can speed it up by placing the meat into individual portions of a muffin tin. Bake your meatloaf at 450 degrees at 15 minutes.

Keep Ice Cream Cool

Bubble wrap is a powerful insulator. While on the road, keep your Chunky Monkey from melting by wrapping the pint in plastic bubble wrap. It'll stay firm for hours.

Tea For Flavorful Grains

Make your grains tastier with tea. Cook your quinoa, millet, brown rice, or bulgur with teat infused water. Lapsang souchong, Earl Grey, and chai work well for this.

Make Crunchy Taco Shells From Tortillas With Your Oven Rack

Since store-bought crunchy taco shells go stale in a hot minute, make your crunchy taco shells from your soft tortillas only when you need them! Drape the tortillas over your oven rack in the shape of a crunchy taco shell until crispy. Then, proceed to eat your weight in tacos (which is the only way to eat them)!

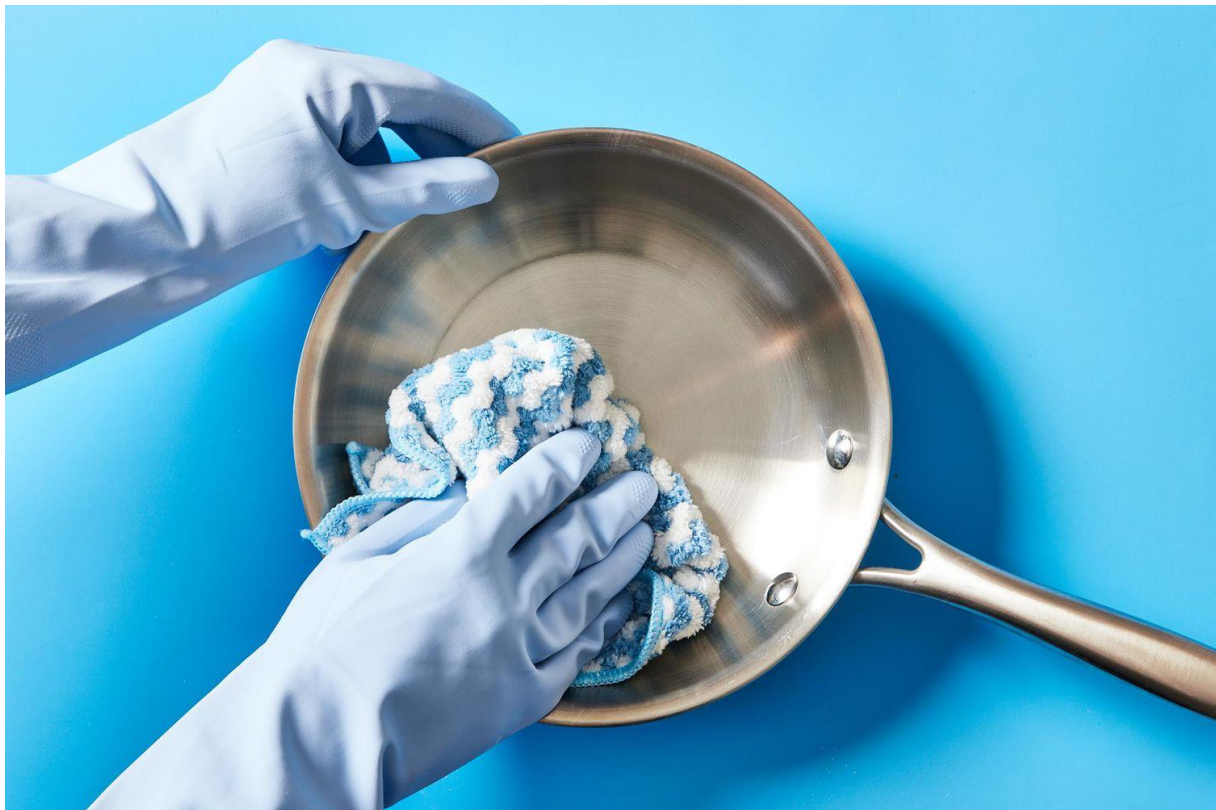
Don't Waste The Rest Of The Wine

If you have the rest of a bottle of wine that you know you're not going to drink within a few days, you can still salvage it. Pour the wine out into an ice cube tray. Use the cubes in a cooking recipe, wine spritzer, or pitcher of sangria.

Make Cheese Grating Easy

Make grating semisoft cheeses like mozzarella easy. Just put it in the freezer for about 30 minutes. It will be much easier to grate this way.

Shine Up Stainless Steel



Stainless steel can get dull with a lot of use. You can permanently dull those surfaces if you're not using the right cleaning products. Mix vinegar and water together and spray the solution on your surfaces and wipe it down.

5. Clever house-cleaning hacks from professional cleaners



Don't forget the doormat

Doormats are your best friend when it comes to trapping dirt, so make sure you have two – one outside the house and one inside.

This tip is especially helpful when there's a lot of rain and you have wet, muddy shoes going in and out of the house.

Just be sure to clean the mats regularly as dirty mats contribute to the mess.

Combine tasks

Kill two birds with one stone by doing similar cleaning tasks at the same time.

“Clean your baseboards when you are vacuuming or washing floors, clean blinds when you are cleaning windows, etc,” suggests Becky Rapinchuk, owner of CleanMama.net.

Skip the bucket

Sometimes moving around the mop bucket only makes more of a mess thanks to the dirty water splashing around.

Leslie Reichert, founder of The Green Cleaning Coach and author of The Joy Of Green Cleaning, has a bucket-less mopping technique that works wonders: a spray bottle filled with diluted cleaning solution and a microfibre mop. Or choose a mop that allows you to fill the base with water and a little floor cleaner and spray from the handle as you go.

Stock up on products

No, a bathroom tile cleaner shouldn't be used to wipe down your mirrors.

"The right products that actually clean go a long way to getting the job done more effectively and efficiently for you," says McGee.

Buy a soap dispenser dish brush

According to Dana White, founder of A Slob Comes Clean, you can use a soap dispenser dish brush in your shower.

"Mark it for the bathroom only with a permanent marker, and fill it with your favorite dish soap," she says.

"Hang it in the shower, and you can scrub the shower while you're in it anyway. Dish soap does a great job cleaning the bathroom!"

Vacuum the right way

Rapinchuk recommends first vacuuming a room horizontally and then vertically to get all of the trapped dirt.

Most cleaning experts agree that vacuuming slowly is also very important to ensure that vacuum picks up all the dirt particles.

Define "clean"

Everyone has a different idea of what "clean" actually means.

Some think a sparkling floor is clean, while others are happy with just doing a load of laundry.

Beth McGee, author of Get Your House Clean Now: The Home Cleaning Method Anyone Can Master, suggests asking yourself questions like how much stuff do I have and what type of home do I have to determine what clean and organised really means to you.

A pillowcase can be a cleaner

Obviously, you don't want to use the pillowcase you sleep on every night, but using a pillowcase to clean your ceiling fans is a hack that you need to try ASAP.

"The pillowcase holds the dust so it doesn't fall on a table or bed," says Reichert.

"A very clean way to dust a fan."

Create a cleaning plan



We all have those random cleaning bursts, but having a plan beforehand will make your cleaning process smoother.

"Cleaning is really like a dance. You start high, work down and around, and carefully observe anything that needs attention," says McGee.

"As you move around, wipe light switches, door frames, baseboards, walls, working in a circle around a room and not back and forth from one thing across the room to another. Don't get distracted, keep a smooth motion around your home."

Use your dishwasher

Dishwashers are for so much more than just washing dishes.

Reichert recommends using yours to dust off knickknacks like jars, toys and glass candle globes.

Pretty much anything glass or ceramic should be fine going in the dishwasher, but you do want to stay away from putting meltable plastics.

5.1. Clever house-cleaning hacks from professional cleaners



Nothing is more challenging than cleaning hard-to-reach spots in a home. Ceiling fans, air ducts, windows, blinds, and garbage disposal are some areas that are difficult to access. Unfortunately, overlooking these spots can accumulate dust, dirt and harmful allergens, polluting the entire indoor environment.

Whether deep cleaning your home or preparing it for the final rental inspection, ensure you create a strategy to access difficult surfaces efficiently. So, today, we bring you some pro tips and tricks to help clean hard-to-reach spots in your home. The best part is that you don't need expensive tools or gadgets. With some planning and strategy, you can easily banish dirt, grime and germs to achieve a spotless and hygienic home.

Let's Get Started!

Clean Ceiling Walls with a Telescopic Duster

Removing cobwebs, insect marks, and accumulated dirt and dust from ceiling walls, light fixtures, and mouldings can be daunting. So, invest in a long-extendable microfiber duster that can reach high ceilings and crannies without a hint of stress.

Microfiber duster can trap dust effectively, while a long extendable handle lets you access nooks without a ladder. Isn't it amazing? In fact, many professionals follow the top-to-bottom approach for a meticulous end of lease cleaning Sydney. They use microfiber cloths and tools to effectively remove dust and debris and pass your rental inspection.

Dust Your Ceiling Fan with a Pillowcase

Did you know dust-laden ceiling fans can cause indoor air pollution? They can spread and circulate allergens into the air, leading to respiratory disorders, allergies, and even asthma symptoms.

So, if you find cleaning ceiling fan blades difficult, try this smart technique and achieve spotless results. All you need is a ladder or a step stool, a cotton pillowcase (an old one) and a white vinegar solution (for sticky grime). Wrap the pillowcase over the blade and put out the dust. This will prevent it from falling on your carpets and floors.

Use Kitchen Tongs For Window Blinds



Window blinds are a great addition to controlling natural light inside the house. However, they are often laden with dust, dirt, and grime that can cause serious health hazards. To clean this hard-to-reach spot, you need a pair of kitchen tongs. Make sure you tie a cloth around it and secure it with a rubber band.

Next, slide it along each slat and wipe off accumulated dust and debris. You can use this trick and maintain clean window blinds all year round.

Vacuum Your Air Vents

Another hard-to-reach spot is the air vent of your HVAC system. Accessing it for deep cleaning is a real task. Well, you can simplify the process with a handy vacuum cleaner and an extendable brush. A HEPA-filtered vacuum cleaner can help you remove 99.8 per cent of allergens and dust particles without hassle.

Wrap a damp microfiber cloth around a knife for smaller vents to dislodge dirt and gunk. You can also hire experts for a professional end of lease cleaning Sydney. They follow proven methods to clean every nook and cranny of your rental property.

An old Toothbrush For Window Tracks, Sliding Doors & Grout Lines

These are the hard-to-reach areas in any home. Their narrow design accumulates dust and makes it difficult to remove it. Instead of overlooking them, use a smart hack in Sydney and achieve desired results like a pro. You can use an old toothbrush or a crevice tool to reach the narrow areas of window tracks, sliding doors, and grout lines.

First, apply the white vinegar solution and leave it for a few minutes. This will help you dislodge dirt and gunk effectively when you scrub with a soft-bristled brush. Ensure you dry the surface to prevent mould infestation.

Soak the Shower Head in Vinegar Solution Overnight

The shower head is often laden with soap scum, calcium deposits and rust stains if you overlook regular cleaning checklist. To clean this difficult-to-reach spot, you can follow this cleaning hack step-by-step:

- Mix one part white vinegar, 1/3 cup baking soda, a teaspoon dishwashing liquid, and water.
- Fill a plastic bag with this solution and submerge the entire shower head.
- Secure it with a band and leave it overnight
- Remove the bag and scrub it with a brush to remove stubborn stains
- Rinse and wipe the surface with a microfiber cloth. This will leave your shower head shiny.

Spruce Up Behind the Toilet Seat

This is one of the dirtiest and most difficult areas for any homeowner to clean. Ensure you equip yourself with rubber gloves, a sponge, a microfiber cloth, and a natural cleaning agent. Start by spraying the cleaning solution and scrub with a sponge.

Make sure you cover nooks and crannies. After that, rinse the area with a clean sponge and wipe it with a dry cloth. You should regularly clean your toilet and prevent the spread of lethal germs and bacteria.

Remove Limescale Around Faucets



Faucets tend to collect dirt, grime and calcium deposits in their crevices. Remove them using baking soda and a soft-bristled brush. Wet the brush and dip it in baking soda. It can effectively remove stains without leaving scratches behind. Gently scrub, rinse and wipe the area to achieve sparkling results.

If you are vacating a rental property, book experts for an expert end of lease cleaning Sydney and secure your full bond money. They leave no signs of dirt and dust behind and help you pass the inspection without any dispute.

Conclusion

Incorporating home hacks into your daily life can lead to meaningful improvements in both comfort and efficiency. From organizing and decluttering to enhancing energy savings and adopting eco-friendly practices, these small changes can create a more functional and enjoyable living space. Whether you aim to simplify tasks, reduce stress, or make your home more inviting, these hacks offer in Sydney practical solutions that positively impact your well-being. By making thoughtful adjustments, you can transform your home into a space that truly supports and enhances your lifestyle.

References:

Home Organization Hacks You Should be Using | Better Homes And Gardens, Retrieved 24 Oct 2024, from

<https://www.bhg.com/home-organization-hacks-7486691>

DIY Home Decorating Tips | This Old House, Retrieved 24 Oct 2024, from

<https://www.thisoldhouse.com/21018464/11-foolproof-home-decorating-tips>

Clever Kitchen Hacks That Will Save You Time And Effort | Bored Panda, Retrieved 24 Oct 2024, from

<https://www.boredpanda.com/clever-kitchen-hacks/>

Clever house-cleaning hacks from professional cleaners | Readers Digest, Retrieved 24 Oct 2024, from

<https://www.readersdigest.com.au/home-tips/clever-house-cleaning-hacks-professionals-swear>

Cleaning Tips For Hard-To-Reach Spots In Your Home | End Of Lease Cleaners Sydney, Retrieved 24 Oct 2024, from

<https://www.endofleasecleaners.sydney/sydney-cleaning-tips-for-hard-to-reach-spots-in-your-home/>

Gardening Hacks to Help You Get Growing, Approved by Experts | The Spruce, Retrieved 24 Oct 2024, from

<https://www.thespruce.com/gardening-hacks-7374656>